The Sketch

No. 2557—Vol. CXCVII. WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 1942. ONE SHILLING AND SIXPENCE.

1941's BEST ACTRESS AS PRUE CATHAWAY.

JOAN FONTAINE *plays the W.A.A.F. heroine of* "THIS ABOVE ALL," *the 20th Century-Fox film version of Eric Knight's best-seller, due for its London première at the Empire, Leicester Square, on September 18. It has been playing to unprecedented houses in New York and various key cities. Joan Fontaine won the "Oscar," best actress of 1941, award for her performance in "Suspicion." Other photographs of "This Above All" will be found on other pages.*

MOTLEY NOTES.

By ALAN KEMP.

Dash the Expense! Waste, waste, waste! It is becoming a nightmare—the sort of nightmare which goes on haunting you long after you have waked up. What a field for Royal Commissions and Inquiries and Committees! Every now and then the veil is lifted to reveal one little corner of the prodigality of war. Last July a Select Committee of the House of Commons devoted a report to Royal Ordnance factories. One reads that a large amount of space, in some cases amounting to 57 per cent., is unused, and that some works have (or then had) as many as 6000 superfluous employees. The extraordinary thing—and yet not so extraordinary, when you remember the strange reactions of human nature—is that output seems to fall in proportion to the excess of labour. The Report informs us that only about 55 per cent. of hostel accommodation is occupied, that *Lebensraum* for some 16,000 workers is lying idle (being, of course, unavailable for anybody else), and that at least £5,000,000 have been wasted on this purpose, owing to "miscalculations."

"... Stew's improved a bit, Sir. It's a more delicate shade o' green!"
DRAWN BY BERT THOMAS.

Broth. And this is only one corner, though an important one, of the waste. It results from the same old cause—twenty different cooks working on the same broth. What is not spoiled is spilled. And then, of course, everybody is quite cheerful about it and says that it is no use crying over spilt broth—so let's start all over again with forty new cooks and two or three new Departments to direct them, and then something *must* result—if it isn't the intended Scotch broth, it may be some sort of Irish stew or Lancashire hot-pot. Fifteen millions a day; one often wonders how much of that staggering amount is getting a return on the money. One also wonders whether, even in peacetime, it would be any different in a society managed entirely by the State. The only difference between private and public extravagance is that the private spendthrift says, "In for a penny, in for a pound," and the State spendthrift says, "In for a penny, in for a million pounds." The waste of war! It is what Shakespeare, in one of his bitterest moments, called "an expense of spirit in a waste of shame."

Guilty! All this is not a very good example to the patriotic frugality of you and me, but we must do our little bit, whatever the Men of Millions may be doing. I think we are all fairly waste-conscious by this time; we have (very rightly) got to a point where a smear of unused butter (well, marg., if you insist!) on a plate sends a chill to the heart. The other day, having, in a moment of abstraction, dropped a bus ticket on the pavement, I found myself slinking furtively from the scene of the crime, with my coat-collar turned up and my hat pulled over my eyes, expecting the hand to descend on my shoulder any moment. This war-world in which we live produces a number of curious "conditioned reflexes." Several times, during a play or a film, when somebody has drawn open the curtains of a lighted room, I have noticed the whole audience half-start from their seats, and only with great difficulty have I restrained myself from shouting: "Hey! Look out! The Wardens are about!"

The Scrap-heap. In this matter of waste (as, I am sure, in all others) we can confidently look to the A.T.S. for an example. Indeed, they held an Economy Exhibition not very long ago, and here is Our Eye-witness's account of some of the attractions: "Laid temptingly on rows of tables were flans, pastries and savouries, all made from scraps left over from previous meals." Other popular entries were: "puddings made from stale bread" (not entirely original, this?), "stuffed baked potatoes" (yes, but stuffed with *what*?), "and rolls made from vegetables, prunes and herbs, all made from A.T.S. cooks' own recipes entirely from kitchen scraps." I really begin to hope that the average of British domestic cookery is going to look up in the sweet by-and-by, and if so, the war will certainly not have been fought in vain. For the moment, however, my attention is engaged not so much by kitchen scraps as by rubber scraps. I am terribly anxious lest, in an unguarded moment, I should have dropped an old Plimsoll in the dust-bin, or left a superannuated golf-ball exposed to the elements. If so, it looks like either Bow Street or Carey Street, or both, for me. And all the time that I am suffering these agonies of conscience for the cause of economy, Brazil is destroying 75,000 bags of coffee! A merry world, i' faith!

The Crime Wave. But, really, nobody ought to be ashamed of being a criminal nowadays. All the best people have joined the criminal classes. We have seen recently a noble lord and a Minister of the Crown up before the

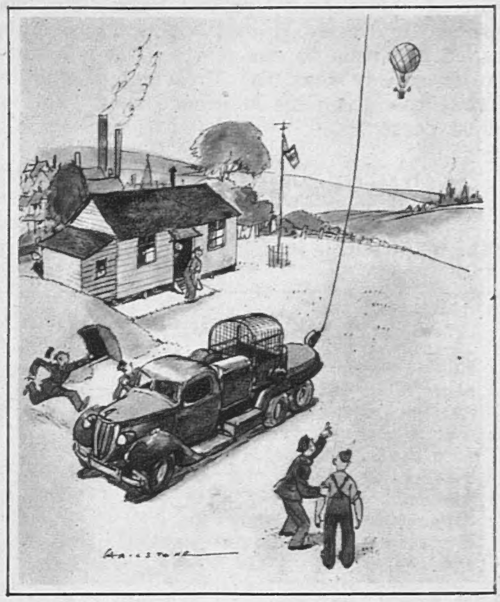
"We've employed a scenic artist to blot out our view of the gas-works!" (DRAWN BY WILSON FENNING.)

beaks (for offences, I need hardly say, of which they had not the slightest knowledge or personal responsibility). The First Lady in the Land has been severely ticked off by the American censor. Mrs. Roosevelt's offence has come as a profound shock to her many admirers—she so far forgot herself as to mention the weather in her weekly gossip column! The other day a man offered to oblige a neighbour by keeping a joint in his refrigerator until the owner should want it for cooking. This is a crime, or so the learned Magistrate felt bound to hold. And no doubt he was technically right, but may one ask why officials think it worth while to waste public time and money—not to mention harassing decent citizens—on such farcical prosecutions?

Lawyers' War. Legal ingenuity certainly does not lack opportunities nowadays. I do not know the decision, but a case in Scotland recently raised the very delicate point whether a member of the Home Guard is or is not a "common soldier." If so, his estate is apparently exempt from death duties, and in this case a little matter of £64,000 depended on the decision. Another proof that the Home Guard is a thoroughly democratic institution; and, after all, if Generals, blazing with medals, are content to serve as Lance-Corporals, they ought not to object to being called "common soldiers"—though somehow one doesn't like the *tone* of that Act of Parliament; it was passed in snobbish Victorian days, when they didn't know any better. Another nice legal question is whether a cricket-ball or a football is a bomb. That is a somewhat broad way of putting it, but if you are a Civil Defence worker, and you are injured at "organised sports," you are entitled to the same compensation as if you were hit by a bomb, so that I suppose cricket-balls and footballs may count as high explosives. I have known several which definitely *did*, especially the one which took me on the nose behind the stumps and ended my career as the Second Strudwick. But if an Air-Raid Warden, at an "organised" boxing-match, marks a National Fireman with a cauliflower ear for life, what is the position then? A cauliflower ear or a Græco-Roman nose is worth a trifle of compensation, I take it?

Old-World Courtesy.

And while we are on the subject of cauliflower ears, a very quick and certain way of getting one (if you should feel the urge) is to go up to a man twice your weight, who is smoking a cigarette in a non-smoking compartment and, with a neat left hook, knock the fag out of his mouth. Yet Mr. Claude Mullins (if he is correctly reported, which I rather doubt) says that he "admires the courage" of anybody who gives this demonstration of manly vigour. Queer! I should have supposed it to be not only an exhibition of abominable bad manners and bad temper, but a gross assault, worth a fiver of anybody's money; and for that reason I find it difficult to believe that Mr. Mullins said exactly what he is supposed to have said. A little give and take, a little bear and forbear, will generally get over these trifling contretemps—as in the instance of Bill Smith, who was enjoying a persistent-gas (non-vesicant) pipe in a smoking compartment, when a high-toned lady came in with a proprietary air. Bill was within his rights, but, being one of Nature's Gentlemen, he said: "I 'ope, Mum, you don't object?" "I object very strongly!" said Lady Clara Vere de Vere, very proud and haughty. "Ho, do yer?" says Bill. "Then, my gurl, *hout you git!*" Just a little tact—that's all that's wanted.



"Blimey! Look! . . . a balloon!"

DRAWN BY HAILSTONE.

Quizzery—

If that is not enough to deal with the situation, let us have a "quiz" about it. We seem to be having quizzes about everything else, so why not about smoking and non-smoking compartments? Quizzers, we are proudly informed, have been running round Lancashire and Yorkshire, standing in doorways with yard-long questionnaires, and cross-examining housewives about their reactions to dried eggs. I wonder if they have gleaned a single piece of information which could not have been supplied by two or three intelligent grocers in the district? I don't like carping at Lord Woolton, for I think that on the whole he is doing a splendid job for us, but I am sorry to see him falling to the quiz virus. Our arch-quizzer appears to be the Board of Trade. It has issued a "Clothing Quiz" in 99 paragraphs, and it will be regretted by all sportsmen (and sportswomen) that it just missed its century. There is another inquiry—and I suppose we may soon expect another nation-wide quiz—about the durability of utility stockings. I suggest to the Board of Trade that it can obtain all the information it needs on this subject, in two minutes and in exhaustive terms, from the first woman it cares to stop and question. But officials must live and quizzes must luxuriate.

—and Snoopery.

They are bad enough and futile enough, but they are not as bad as the methods of the *agent provocateur*. I unhesitatingly affirm that the vast majority of people in this country are doing their best to obey extremely complicated laws, often in very difficult circumstances; and anything more outrageous than that officials should deliberately tempt them to sin it is

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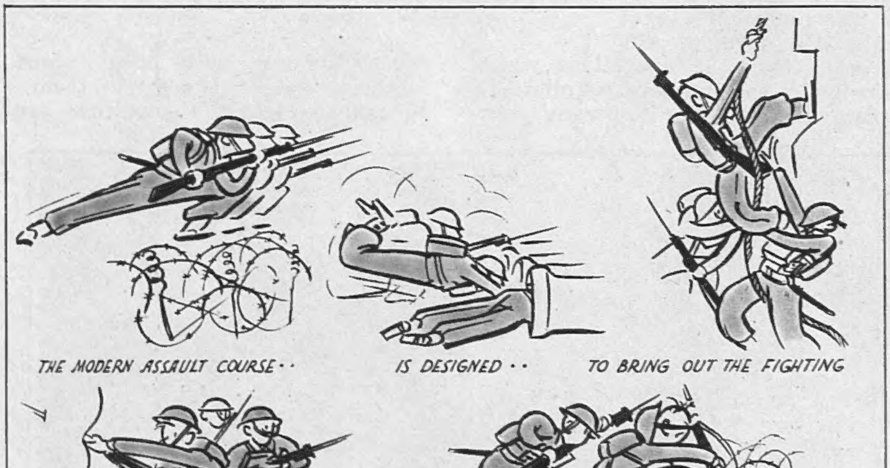


GETTING FIT! (DRAWN BY BEN HOOPER.)

Continued.]

difficult to imagine. If the police were to do this in peacetime, there would be a volcanic uproar. There have been at least two very bad cases of this sort of thing lately (proved cases—how many unproved ?), and Mr. Harold Nicolson has emphatically called attention to one of them. It is a satisfaction to everybody that the President of the Board of Trade has given his assurance that "this practice must cease."

The Lion's Mouth.

But this is not quite the end of the story. Once snooping becomes a habit, under official auspices, it can take many subtle forms. That doughty "murmurer," Sir Ernest Benn, has recently cited "a dozen sheets of wasted paper, some of it printed on one side only, emanating from the Board of Trade, and all of it inviting honest traders to turn King's Evidence against their neighbours, rivals and competitors." Both Trade Associations (extremely arbitrary and highly self-interested bodies) and individual merchants are invited to inform the Board of Trade of alleged cases in which their competitors have gained unfair advantages in one particular or another. This is nothing more or less than the Lion's Mouth of Venice. It encourages sneaks—the covetous, the disappointed and the malicious—to make allegations which they would not dare to make under the ordinary restraints of law. Even worse than that, it gives the opportunity to powerful and unscrupulous traders to use official machinery in order to advance their own interests and damage those of their rivals. Human nature being what it is, is it likely that that temptation will be resisted ? They say that it is better that ten guilty men should go free than that one innocent man should be convicted. It is certainly better that a few crooks should "get away with it" than that one should be caught out by the methods of the tell-tale, the whisperer and the keyhole-peeper.

WASTE PAPER CALL-UP !

Full mobilisation orders for waste paper went out some time ago. Are you sure that there are no useless scraps—no documents—no cartons—no hoarded letters evading the call-up in your house ? Remember that every piece of paper must be collected, for it is an essential munition of war ; and the salvage of the W.P.B. will help to beat the enemy.

"Two seats in the stalls ? Sorry, Madam, I think you have the wrong theatre . . ." (DRAWN BY PITTS.)

No Hard Feelings !

Well, well—red-tapirs (you know, those animals with long noses and tongues) also had mothers, and if I ever do them wrong, I am only too glad to acknowledge it. Some time ago I complained that a fuel-rationing form which I was asked to fill up was quite impossible for me to "complete" owing to certain special circumstances. My remarks seem to have caused pain in official quarters, and have elicited a very civil offer, which I appreciate, to help me in my difficulty. I am very happy to state that when I put my problem (which, however, is as yet unsolved) to the local authority, I was met with courtesy and consideration. But my main point is, I think, unaffected. It is that in a matter like fuel rationing, no buff form which you can devise can cover the multitude of different circumstances ; and although exceptions are allowed, they are so many and so various that it seems beyond human ingenuity to deal with them all fairly. However, no sensible person would suppose that these difficulties can outweigh a national necessity ; I only wish I were convinced that the necessity need ever have arisen.

"I feel it's up to me to let it go at that, Mr. Stipple, in view of the seriousness of the rubber situation." (DRAWN BY SILENUS.)

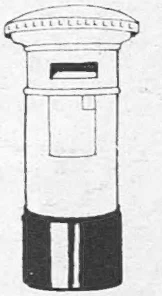
The forty-sixth of our SERIES OF PLATES IN FULL COLOUR *published in this issue of "The Sketch" is by* DAVID WRIGHT.

"I THINK I'LL GET *YOU* TO TELL THEM THIS PIECE ABOUT 'ALL HAVING TO TIGHTEN OUR BELTS!'"

DRAWN BY FRANK REYNOLDS.

Please forward

By JOYCE DENNYS.



MY DEAR ROBERT—We have all been to our Cathedral City to see "Hamlet." One of the actors was a sort of cousin of Mrs. Whinebite, and as the seats weren't going too well she rounded us up, like a cattle-rancher on the films, and herded us, lowing mournfully, up to the station and into the train.

"Is this Journey Really Necessary?" said Mrs. Savernack, making a last bid for freedom.

"Yes," said Mrs. Whinebite firmly, and closed the carriage door on us while she went to buy tickets.

A good deal of the journey was spent in paying her back the money for our fares. Everybody borrowed change from everybody else, and even then it wouldn't come right, until a kindly clergyman in the corner offered nine pennies and a threepenny-bit in return for a shilling.

"She went to buy tickets."

"Don't tell Mrs. Whinebite," said little Mrs. Simpkins in a low voice, "but I've forgotten what 'Hamlet' is about."

"It's about a young man called Hamlet," said Colonel Simpkins helpfully.

"And a girl called Ophelia who goes mad," said the Admiral.

"And a Ghost," said Lady B.

"And a Queen called Gertrude who gets poisoned," said the Conductor.

"And a King called Claudius who gets stabbed," I said. "And a young man called Laertes who gets killed in a duel, and an old man called Polonius who gets killed by mistake."

Little Mrs. Simpkins sighed. "I remember now," she said. "Not a Bright Piece. I think they ought to try and put on something Bright in wartime, don't you?"

Robert, I am now middle-aged. "Ever at my back I hear Time's wingèd chariot drawing near," and many of the careless raptures of youth leave me with an unquickened pulse. But still, Robert, still I get the same old thrill as the curtain goes up. Charles says he has seen me sit, rapt, through a Pierrot show on the beach, my hands damp with excitement; and though this isn't absolutely true, I *do* enjoy a play, and though Mrs. Whinebite would never suspect it, the plays of William Shakespeare are my favourites, and of his plays the ones I "did" at school and know well are the ones I like best of all.

The house lights lowered, and Lady B., who shares my passion for the drama, squeezed my hand, and the Curtain Went Up.

"He winked at me."

At the end of the first act Colonel Simpkins murmured something about not feeling well, and went out. The Admiral said he supposed he ought to see if the Old Boy was all right, and went after him. Little Mrs. Simpkins sighed again and said the Poor Ghost always depressed her, and Mrs. Savernack said she supposed Hamlet must be over age, or he'd have been called up. Mrs. Whinebite said, "Was it Real or Feigned Madness?", and stared at us hungrily, each in turn, but nobody felt up to embarking on a discussion with her.

At the end, when the curtain came down on a stage strewn with corpses, I had sat so still that I had needles-and-pins in one foot and a crick in my neck. The Admiral and Colonel Simpkins were waiting for us on the steps outside. They both looked cheerful, and I guessed they had been to visit an Old School Chum who lives near the theatre.

"I've ordered tea at Treherne's," said Mrs. Whinebite.

"She thinks of everything, doesn't she?" said the Conductor, who had planned to take Lady B. and me to his favourite hotel.

At the tea-shop a large table had been prepared for us, as though we were a visiting hockey team, and Mrs. Whinebite, wreathed in smiles, sat herself down behind the teapot, like a schoolmistress who has allowed discipline to relax for once.

"'Hamlet was a tiresome boy.'"

"Poor little Ophelia!" said Lady B., passing a plate of thick bread and butter.

"The person I'm always so sorry for is Queen Gertrude," I said.

"My dear Henrietta!" said Mrs. Whinebite. "She was an adulteress, and an incestuous one at that."

"Oh, dear, I do dislike those sort of words," said little Mrs. Simpkins.

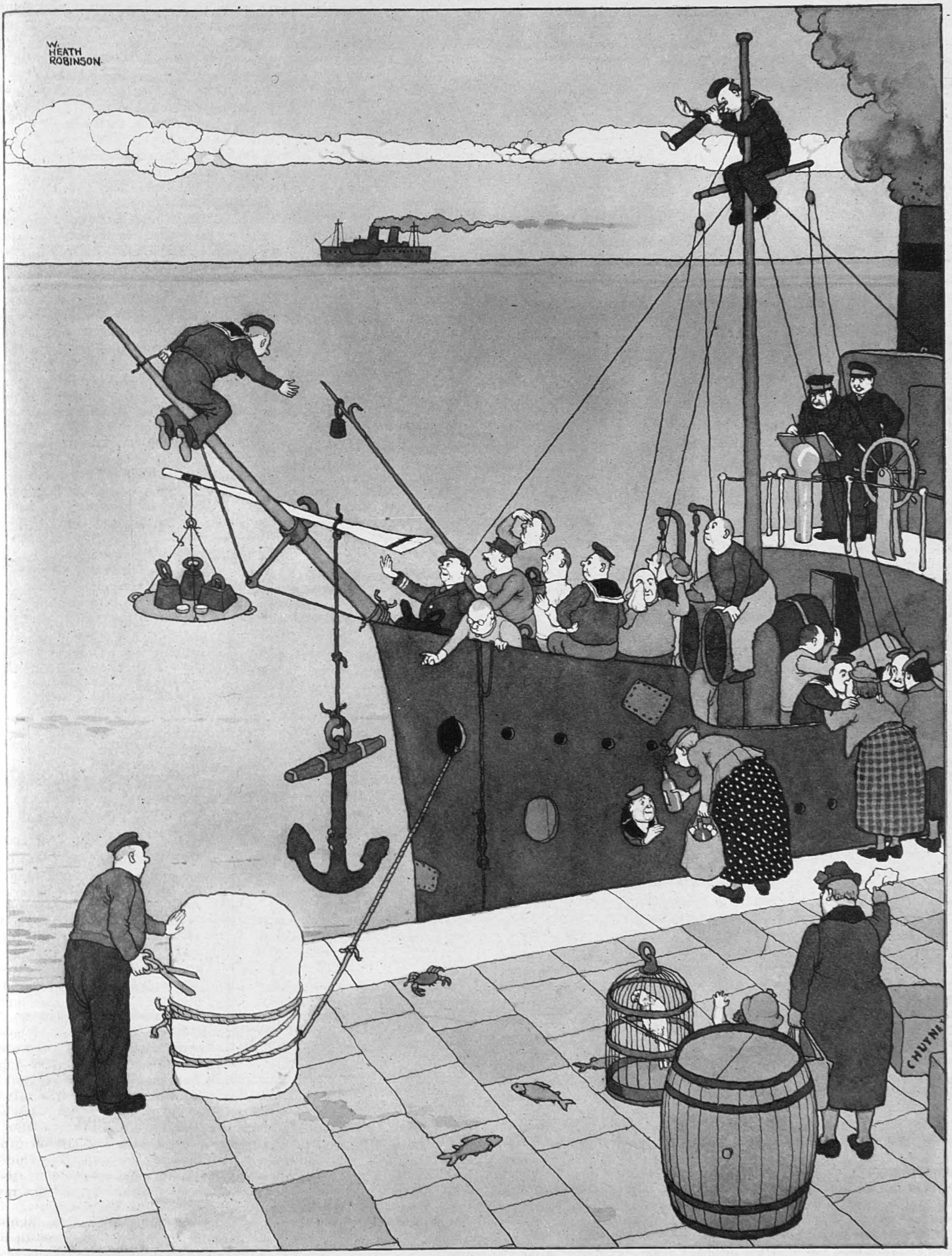
"Well, I don't know," I said, carried away by a subject to which I had given much thought. "To begin with, I'm sure she didn't know her husband had been murdered, and then I can't help thinking she must have had rather a dreary life with Hamlet and his father. I mean to say, let's face it, Hamlet *was* a tiresome boy, though I dare say it was partly her fault for spoiling him. But if I'd heard Bill speaking to an old man like Hamlet spoke to Polonius, I'd have *spanked* him. And nobody could call Hamlet's father a jolly sort of man, though of course he may have been jollier before he became a Ghost. I always think King Claudius must have been good fun. People with red hair often are. Of course, he doesn't appear at his best in the play, biting his nails like that, but I expect he had plenty of charm and vitality really, and Gertrude fell for it, and who can blame her?" I paused for breath.

"Henrietta always likes to put forward an original point of view," said Mrs. Whinebite. "Bless her!" she added viciously, and I buried my scarlet face in my tea-cup.

"Fine play!" said Colonel Simpkins. "I was only sorry I missed such a lot of it," and he winked at me with the eye farthest from Mrs. Whinebite.

Always your affectionate Childhood's Friend,

HENRIETTA.



"THE SKETCH" BRAINS TRUST—NO. 9.

"HOW IS THE SHIP'S ANCHOR WEIGHED?" *After a sharp argument the Resident Sailor worked out this drawing, which gives a clear demonstration of a somewhat weighty affair.*

DRAWN BY W. HEATH ROBINSON.

CINEMA CAMEOS.

By C. A. LEJEUNE.

"MY GAL SAL," the Technicolor musical comedy at the Odeon, is about the last thing in the world I should have associated with Theodore Dreiser, author of "An American Tragedy." Yet Dreiser wrote this little bit of fluff, this story of a philandering, showy, notorious song-writer of the 'nineties. Reason? Song-writer was Dreiser's brother. He signed himself Paul Dresser. He wrote "On the Banks of the Wabash," the title-song, "My Gal Sal," and other light numbers never published in this country. He was, it appears, a colourful figure of the New York scene in the days of John L. Sullivan ("Gentleman John"), the can-can and the champagne supper. The beginning of his career was humbler but equally colourful. He broke into the world of entertainment by playing two pianos simultaneously in a medicine-show.

If we can believe a brother's evidence, Paul Dresser's star rose when musical-comedy actress Sally Elliott dropped in to the wagon show one night and laughed at him. She laughed at his loud check suit, his jaunty straw boater with the tartan band, his cheapjack knee- and elbow-work on the two pianos. But she didn't laugh at his tune—the new number he had composed, but not yet titled. She liked it so much that she went away and "borrowed" it. She wrote a lyric, named it "Come Tell Me," and rushed it into her new show, "Belles of Broadway." Dresser, arriving in New York, found it the rage of the town, the music publishers frantically hunting for the composer. He signed on the dotted line, reluctantly accepted Sally as his partner, and in no time at all was turning out song-hit after song-hit.

The rest of the film is only minor drama, recalling tiffs and reconciliations with Sally, extravagant success, a brief period of failure, flirtations with some rich Countess, and an eventual hint of sober matrimony. Like most of these biographical pictures, it is confected drama, for life is seldom as well arranged as it appears in the movies. But what "My Gal Sal" lacks in suspense, it makes up for in spectacle. The screen is a frame for bright and often well-arranged patterns. Sally's stage-shows, Sally's array of costumes provide a field-day for the Technicolor designers. There is always something fresh to see, always some gay tune to listen to. For not only was Dresser himself prolific, but four new modern numbers have been added to the score.

"My Gal Sal" is played by a couple of stars who are at least as colourful as the production—Victor Mature and Rita Hayworth. Mature, referred to in Hollywood as "the beautiful hunk," is considered by those who are supposed to know such things as the most likely Great Screen Lover of the next ten years. His style is not my style, but from the violence of opinions expressed on Mr. Mature, I am persuaded he is a man of outstanding personality. His looks are at least unusual, and, partnered with a blonde or a redhead, those craggy dark features and black locks are a gift to Technicolor.

Rita Hayworth, the redhead, is startling, too, in her way. She is about as much like a musical-comedy actress of the 'nineties as a "Spitfire" is like an aspidistra. One of the most flamboyant of the younger stars, she is one of the most expert too. Her dancing is the real thing. Dancing is in her blood. Her grandfather, Antonio Cansino, was one of the most celebrated classical dancers in Spain. Her father, Emilio Cansino, was a professional dancer on the American stage. Rita herself—Margarita Carmen Cansino is her real name—made her dancing début at the age of fourteen, when she stepped out with her cousin in a Spanish number, in a stage prologue to the Irene Dunne-John Boles film, "Back Street."

Rita appeared in thirty-two films before she really caught the public's eye. Thirty-third was the Fred Astaire musical comedy "You 'll Never Get Rich." "You 'll Never Get Rich" may not have done very much for Fred Astaire, but it made his partner famous overnight. The vamp part in "Blood and Sand" convinced Hollywood they had found a new star. Not only, they discovered, could Rita Hayworth dance, but her ripe colouring was a Technicolor "natural"; she could sing prettily enough in a small, light voice, and she had a personality that brought the *loges* out of their after-dinner sleep. "My Gal Sal," and an alliterative testimonial on the adverts., was "Riotous—Ravishing—Redheaded—Rita!" 's reward.

A musical film of a very different order is "THE BRIGHT PATH," the latest offering of the Soviet season at the Tatler. "The Bright Path" is one of Russia's less ambitious works, light in texture; a modern Cinderella story of a peasant maid-of-all-work, who grows up to be an accomplished weaver, and wins not only the hand of engineer Prince Charming, but the Order of Lenin.

But, light as it is, "The Bright Path" has been given expert handling. Composer is Dunayevsky, who is, I am assured, the most famous light musical composer in Russia. Director is Alexandrov, for many years the great Eisenstein's assistant. Star is Lyubov Orlova, Alexandrov's wife, who sang in the Dunayevsky-Alexandrov piece, "Volga-Volga." "The Bright Path" has the same impudent gaiety as "Volga-Volga," the same studiously casual air, the same sense of camera design, the same obvious enthusiasm for the cinema—a quality that is not always found in Western films. The score has style, and although "The Bright Path" is no masterpiece, it is, in its small way, a charming and unusual film.

"Unusual" is a mild word for "INVISIBLE AGENT" (Marble Arch Pavilion). This amazing piece, which might well have been adapted from a boys' serial thriller, presents us with a hero (Jon Hall), a spy for the democracies, whose grandfather has left him a formula for invisibility. Just one little jab in the arm with a hypodermic, and the spy disappears—or all those parts of him that are not made visible by clothing. To do the trick thoroughly, he has to strip himself of the lot, and we get the always engaging sight of empty trousers kicking madly in the air, a pair of goggles snatched by unseen hands from cavernous eye-sockets. It seems a chilly life for the spy, and he is soon sneezing, even though he is sent to Berlin, and not the Russian front. Once, only once, he ventures to object, and then not to the conditions, but the principle of the thing. "Do you think," he suggests mildly, "that the world is ready for such a discovery?"

Although I cannot feel that invisibility would be considered the best form in the book of espionage, its advantages are obvious to anyone contemplating taking on the Japanese and Germans simultaneously. Our hero, dropped by parachute on or near the Wilhelmstrasse, does just that little thing. With the help of Maria Sorenson (Ilona Massey),

THE BEST THEATRES.

*Starred by "The Sketch." ***=highest value.*

**Adelphi: "THE DANCING YEARS." Ivor Novello in his romantic musical play, with Muriel Barron and Roma Beaumont.

***Aldwych: "WATCH ON THE RHINE." Diana Wynyard, Anton Walbrook, Athene Seyler and Valerie Taylor. Anti-Nazis in the U.S.A.

***Apollo: "FLARE PATH." R.A.F. "ops." Phyllis Calvert, Adrianne Allen.

**Coliseum: "THE BELLE OF NEW YORK." Revival, with Evelyn Laye.

**Comedy: "MURDER WITHOUT CRIME." Raymond Lovell, well supported.

**Garrick: "WARN THAT MAN." Gordon Harker foils a Fifth Columnist.

** Globe: "THE MORNING STAR." Emlyn Williams in his own raid-nights play. Angela Baddeley.

**Haymarket: "THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA." Vivien Leigh in a Shavian revival. Well cast.

**Hippodrome: "GET A LOAD OF THIS." George Black's surprise musical. Vic Oliver, Jeanne Ravel.

**Lyric (Sept. 12): "REBECCA." Revival.

**Palace: "FULL SWING." Cicely Courtneidge and Jack Hulbert at their best.

**Palladium: "GANGWAY." George Black's Musical Smile; with Ben Lyon, Vera Lynn.

**Phœnix: "SKY HIGH" revue. Hermiones Baddeley and Gingold; Walter Crisham; Naunton Wayne; Elizabeth Welch.

*Piccadilly: "MACBETH." John Gielgud, Gwen Ffrangcon-Davies.

**Prince of Wales: "NO ORCHIDS FOR MISS BLANDISH." Well-produced, slick gangsterism. Hartley Power, Linden Travers, Robert Newton.

***St. James's: "BLITHE SPIRIT." Noel Coward brings two ghost wives back to earth. Fay Compton, Kay Hammond, Cecil Parker, Margaret Rutherford.

**Saville: "FINE AND DANDY." Good show, with Leslie Henson, Stan Holloway, Dorothy Dickson, Douglas Byng.

***Savoy: "THE MAN WHO CAME TO DINNER." Brilliant boorishness by Robert Morley.

**Stoll: "ROSE MARIE." Revival, with Marjorie Browne; Phyllis Monkman; Raymond Newell.

*Strand: "NIGHT OF THE GARTER." Revival, with Sydney Howard.

*Vaudeville: "MEN IN SHADOW." Sabotage in France. John Mills.

**Victoria Palace: "TWENTY TO ONE." Laugh-making racing musical play. Lupino Lane; Greta Fayne; Winifred Sloane.

*Wyndham's: "QUIET WEEK-END." Sequel to "Quiet Wedding."

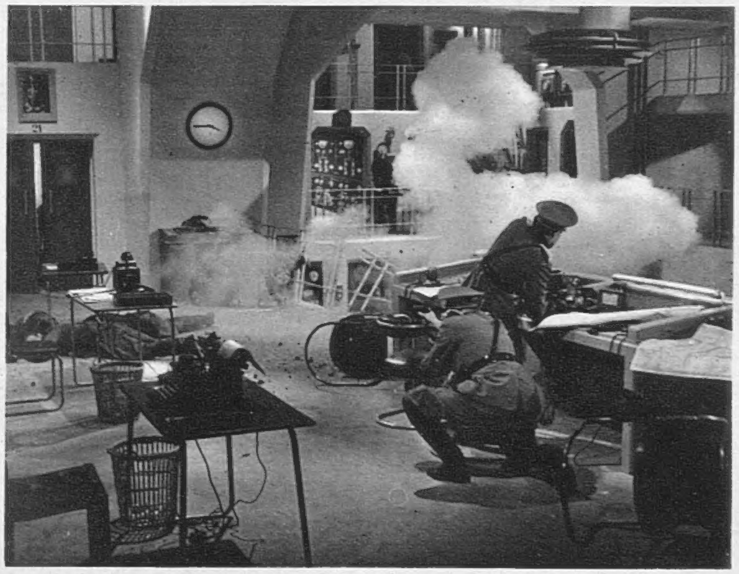
N.B.—While we shall always do our best to keep this list up to date, we cannot hold ourselves responsible for any errors which may occur. Consult your daily paper; ring up the theatre, to avoid disappointment.

he outwits the Master Mind of Germany (Sir Cedric Hardwicke) and drives the Master Mind of Japan (Peter Lorre) to *hara kiri*. He also decimates the bomber fleet drawn up at the Tempelhof aerodrome for an attack on New York, and flies to England with details of Hitler's great sabotage plan for the United States. Safe in a hospital near the rocky fastnesses of Kent—or wherever it may be that his aeroplane lands—he applies the secret antidote to the secret drug. The handsome, regular features of Jon Hall appear again, to the relief of Maria Sorenson, really " Miss Maria Goodrich, one of our most trusted agents."

" THE BIG SHOT " (Gaumont) will surprise few. It presents Humphrey Bogart as a gangster again, involved with bank-robberies, crooked lawyers, jail-breaks, mobsters, a kindly warden, and a blonde moll (Irene Manning). Late, but not too late—on his prison death-bed, in fact—he repents the misguided zeal that led him to become a Big Shot. The story is told in a flashback, and the best scene is a police-chase at the climax, over icy roads. Never have motor-cycles skidded more bravely, tyres screeched with such anguish on hairpin bends. Never have so many stunt-men—or one stunt-man more frequently—been tossed over precipitous banks. Sheer noise and speed achieve here an excitement that the story is rarely able to inspire, although Mr. Bogart, still one of the most satisfactory gangsters on the screen, works manfully and well.

" Secret Mission " (Leicester Square Theatre). A British Commando reaches France, and Peter Garnett (HUGH WILLIAMS), *British secret agent, gets into the house of Michele de Carnot* (CARLA LEHMANN), *a Frenchwoman in the pay of Germany. She holds him up with an ancient pistol before he whips round and overpowers her.*

Peter Garnett (HUGH WILLIAMS), *Raoul de Carnot* (JAMES MASON), *Michele's brother, but true to France, Red Gowan* (ROLAND CULVER), *Nobby Clark* (MICHAEL WILDING), *and Major Lang* (KAREL STEPANEK), *of the British Commando, land on the French coast and cut the wire.*



British paratroops are blowing up the German Secret Service headquarters, and the Nazi officers do their best to defend themselves.

To gain admittance to the German headquarters, Red Gowan and Peter Garnett fake passes. Garnett's pass—ostensibly signed by Ribbentrop—is a permit to sell champagne to the German officers ; he is opening a bottle to demonstrate its excellence.

" SECRET MISSION " (Leicester Square) is a British spy-story that might have packed more excitement into its ninety minutes and been none the worse for it. Four men are sent to Occupied France to get information of German troop dispositions, and prepare the way for a Commando raid. One, a Free Frenchman (James Mason), has a sister at the local château. Another, a Cockney (Michael Wilding), has a French wife in the local estaminet. The result makes for an odd social atmosphere, a cosy domesticity not generally associated with films of this type. Sister (Carla Lehmann) is a stunning dresser, but, I fear, a trifle dumb. To her surprise and grief she learns that her brother and his nice English friend (Hugh Williams) have not come to stay. Love, in the end, clears her cloudy mind to sone extent, but one suspects she is left alone at last, still feeling that a trip to France in wartime is as easy as a pre-war steamer jaunt from Folkestone to Boulogne. On the sterner side, there is the bustle of a small Commando raid, and the death of the Free Frenchman for the land he loves. The usual fun at German headquarters is introduced, this time by a scene in which two of the secret missionaries masquerade as agents of Ribbentrop placing orders for champagne. Lest one miss the point of the humour, composer Mischa Spoliansky has underlined it with a burlesque musical score.

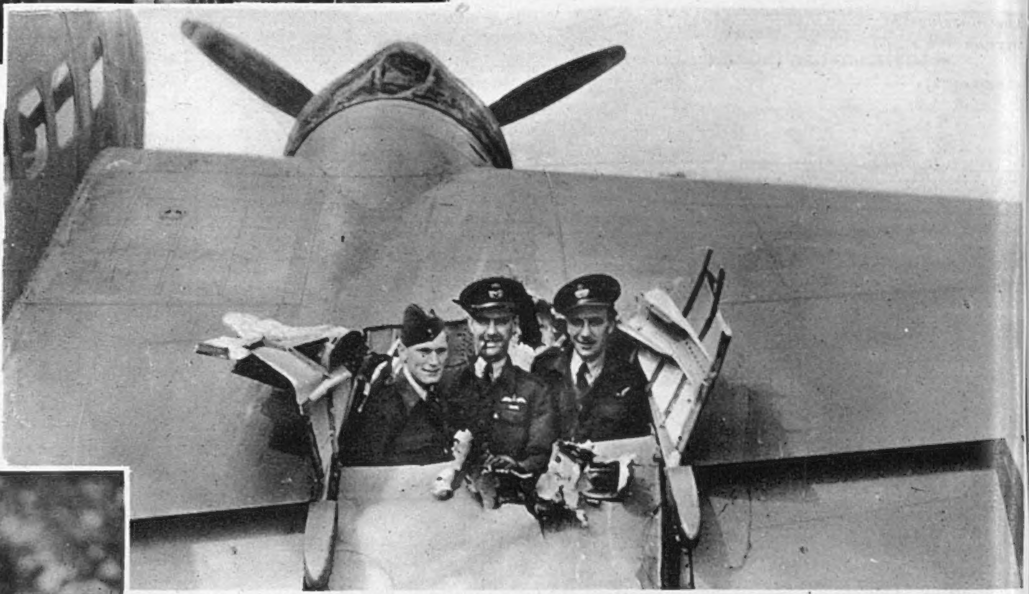
Lastly, we have another of Bette Davis's intriguing studies of vice, " IN THIS OUR LIFE " (Warner's). Seldom has she played a meaner heroine. Seldom has she looked younger and more deceptively dewy than she does here. Without a qualm she jilts her own young man (George Brent) on the eve of their wedding, to run away with her sister's husband (Dennis Morgan), Driving him to suicide by her behaviour, she turns her attention again to the first suitor, now about to marry the sister (Olivia de Havilland). A hit-and-run car killing, the heroine's attempt to put the blame on an innocent coloured boy, and her own death in escaping from the police round off this pretty little tale.

Sordid though it is, the film has power. Miss Davis is magnificently at her ease in the type of rôle she has always done best. Olivia de Havilland proves again, as she did in " Gone With the Wind," her ability to play a good, gentle, long-suffering woman without ever making her seem dull. Direction is by John Huston, who did " The Maltese Falcon," and confirms our earlier impressions of his good cinema sense. Again, as in " The Maltese Falcon," actor Walter Huston plays a small bit unannounced. This time he appears briefly as a bar-tender, as a gesture of goodwill toward's his son's picture.

UTILITY, ROMANCE, DRAMA, ART AND SERVICE.

Contemporary paintings to be sold at Christie's on October 9, in aid of the Duke of Gloucester's Red Cross and St. John Fund, are on view at 15, Old Bond Street.

FRANCES DAY *opened Simpson's "Count Your Coupons" exhibition of utility clothes last week, and is seen with one of the models.*



Right: An enemy shell made this hole—large enough for the pilot and two of his crew to stand in—while the "Hudson" bomber was in action; but the aircraft came home safely.

Girls of the National Fire Service on the South Coast are tremendously enthusiastic about the importance of keeping in training. Here is one well on her toes and ready for anything!

CHIEF YEOMAN RICHARD TEMPLETON, U.S.N., *married* SECOND OFFICER JOAN M. FERGUSON CASEMENT, W.R.N.S., *recently in London.* ADMIRAL STARK, U.S.N., *a guest at the reception, is wishing them good luck.*

PEOPLE AND EVENTS OF NEWS VALUE.

The marriage of MISS LINDSAY BRUCE, *niece of the High Commissioner for Australia, to* LIEUT. S. G. IRWIN, *Rifle Brigade, took place last week.*

MRS. HENRY A. WALLACE, *wife of the Vice-President of the U.S.A., christened the new battleship "Iowa" with a star-spangled bottle.* CAPTAIN SHERMAN KENNEDY *is on the right.*

The HON. ANNE CURZON, *eldest daughter of Major Viscount Scarsdale, is engaged to Mr. Walter J. Latimer Willson, Grenadier Guards.*

MISS RACHEL MARY LATIMER WILLSON, *daughter of Sir Walter Willson, is engaged to Mr. M. C. Thursby-Pelham, Welsh Guards.*

Left: MR. BEVERLEY BAXTER, M.P., *has written a play, "It Happened in September," to be produced in September. It is a political drama of 1939.*

AIR MARSHAL SIR SHOLTO DOUGLAS *was a guest at the wedding of* GROUP CAPTAIN GUS WALKER, D.S.O., D.F.C., *the Rugger International, to* A.-C. DOROTHY BRENDA WILLCOX, *widow of Squadron Leader P. Willcox.*

The marriage of FLT. LIEUT. *the* HON. CHARLES EVELYN NORTH, *youngest son of the Earl of Guilford, to* MISS MAUREEN O'CALLAGHAN BALDWIN *took place at Gillingham.*

WE TAKE OFF OUR HAT TO—

THIS HOME GUARD SCHOOL, for having their own "French" village to practise Commandos in.

The Home Guard Commando goes "fly-walking" up the walls of the houses to get into the upper storeys.

At "Gestapo" headquarters, two "Nazis" (N.C.O. instructors at the School) are captured during the battlecraft exercises.

IN order to practise street-fighting with a first-hand background, the Home Guard of a bombed Midlands town has created from its wrecked buildings in a certain street a splendid reproduction of a French village. "X" Street is the wing where members are taught to instruct in individual, squad and battle platoon training. Signposts with such directions as "Dieppe 24 Kil" or "Paris 259 Kil," houses coloured brightly, advertisements of "vins," "tabac," "Chocolat Meunier," surround the enthusiastic students, adding colour to their realistic exercises. The School is staffed by officers and men of the Regular Army, and each week about forty Home Guard officers and men arrive for a week-end course. They are taught all the phases of street-fighting, offence, defence, offensive defence, how to take cover, sniping, wall-scaling and "mouse-holing," or moving from one end of a street to the other by boring holes through the party-walls of buildings.

Left: N.C.O. instructors of the School impersonate Nazis defending an enemy-occupied café, realistically painted with familiar French signs.

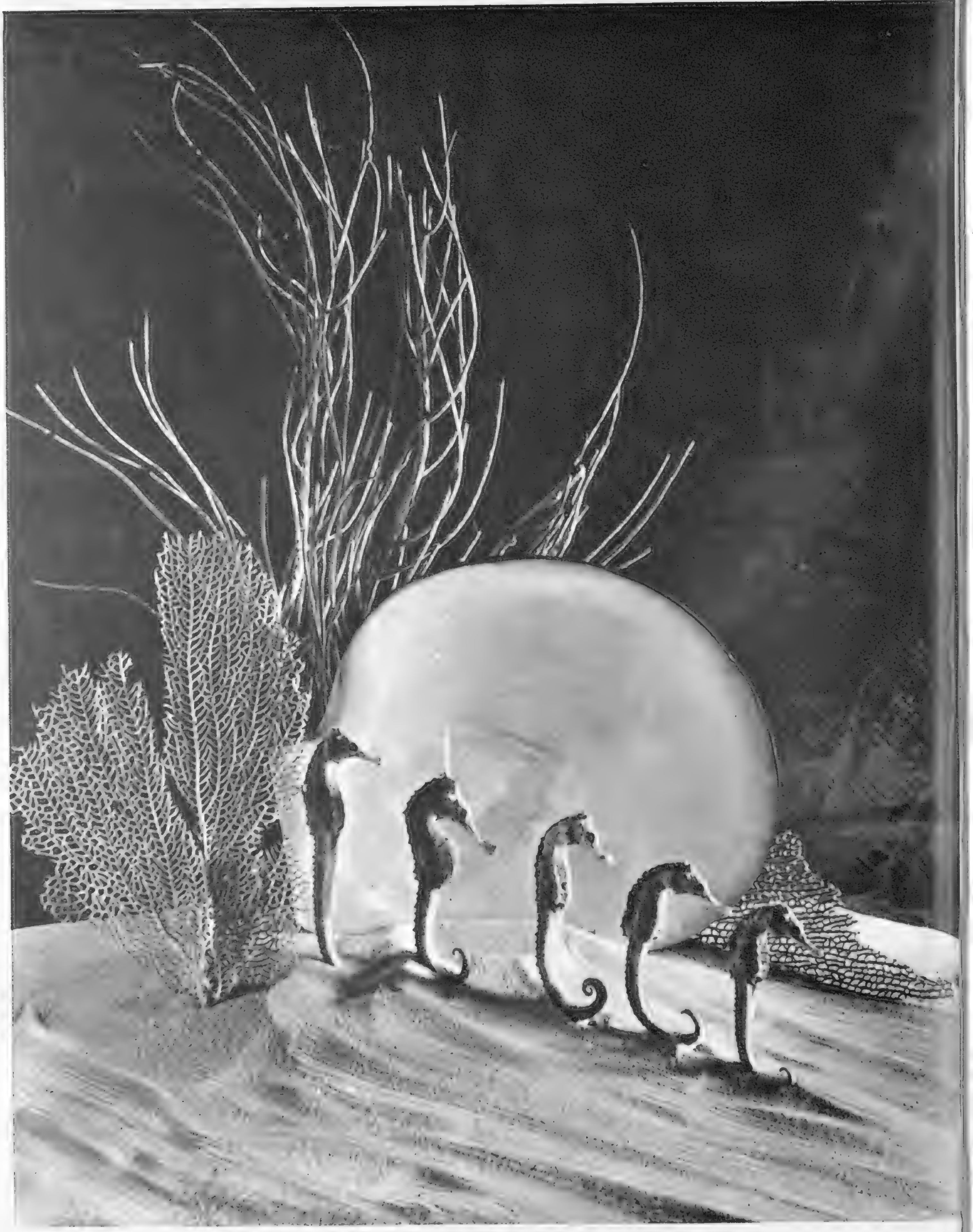
Street-fighting from house to house, sniping, keeping sharp look-out for the enemy, the "invaders" pass Gestapo headquarters in "French Street."

The method of entering enemy-occupied premises known as "mouse-holing" is demonstrated to a class. This Tommy accounts for two of the enemy he has surprised.

"REVERIE."

This beautiful example of pictorial camera work by W. F. N. Mayne is on view at the Thirty-third Annual Exhibition of the London Salon of Photography at the Galleries of the Royal Society of Painters in Water Colours, in Conduit Street. The show, which will remain open until October 10, includes fine portraits, landscapes, and both humorous and decorative examples of up-to-date pictorial camera work.

FROM THE PHOTOGRAPH BY W. F. N. MAYNE. COPYRIGHT RESERVED.



"OCEAN BALLET", by Mrs. Grace Ballentine.

THE CAMERA AND SURREALISM: SAMPLES OF THE ART AT THE LONDON SALON OF PHOTOGRAPHY'S EXHIBITION.

N.B. Colour plat

"SAY 'AH!'", by E. Heimann.

We have chosen two examples of definitely surrealistic origin to illustrate the work of the Thirty-third Annual Exhibition of the London Salon of Photography. The ingenious arrangements of coral, stuffed sea-horses, shells and pottery, suggestive of the imaginative work of Dali and our own and the French surrealist painters, have a strong fascination of their own. The London Salon is holding its show at the galleries of the Royal Society of Painters in Water Colours.

inserted in this issue.

"THIS ABOVE ALL": BEST-SELLER AS A FILM.

Lovers' meeting on a "blind" double date: Prudence (JOAN FONTAINE) and Clive (TYRONE POWER) shelter in a haystack from the rain.

Clive sees Prudence in civilian clothes for the first time. They are on their way to spend her leave at the seaside, and she has changed in the train.

"It's no good! Come on! You don't want to die here!" Prudence tries to induce Clive to explain to her the meaning of the words he has shouted in his sleep.

Back to the Army: Clive, who has overstayed his leave, gives himself up to a sergeant (RHYS WILLIAMS), but is allowed time to call up Prudence and arrange a hasty marriage.

Journey's end: Clive, on his way to join Prudence in London, is involved in an air raid. He gallantly rescues a woman and child, but is himself fatally injured.

"THIS ABOVE ALL," screen version of Eric Knight's novel, was due at the Empire, Leicester Square, on Friday, September 18. Prudence Cathaway is a W.A.A.F. She meets Clive on a "blind" date, and they fall in love, though she comes from a family with "old school-tie" ideals, and he has Left Wing views and a working-class background. There is a mystery about Clive, and Prudence finally discovers that he is a hero of Dunkirk, but has overstayed his leave because he has lost faith in England and English ideals. The *dénouement* is unexpected, and very moving.

"With this ring . . ." The hospital wedding of the dying Clive, and Prudence. ARTHUR SHIELDS plays the clergyman who has been called in to perform the ceremony.

The days of two-man-power transport: Handel (WILFRID LAWSON) *and Mrs. Cibber* (ELIZABETH ALLAN) *in their Sedan chairs.*

Handel refuses to conduct his new opera while Frederick, Prince of Wales, and his friends continue their inane chatter.

The great work of "The Messiah" nearly completed: Phineas (HAY PETRIE) *watches his master, Handel, with anxious, loving eyes.*

Jennens (A. E. MATTHEWS) *tells Handel that he is fortunate to have the chance to write music for the book of his oratorio, "The Messiah."*

Handel rehearses his prima donna, Mrs. Cibber, for the forthcoming production of a new opera.

"THE GREAT MR. HANDEL"— IN ECLIPSE AND FULL SPLENDOUR.

"THE GREAT MR. HANDEL," historical picture directed by Norman Walker, is due for its premier presentation at the Leicester Square Theatre on September 25, when the proceeds are to go to the Royal Society of Musicians of Great Britain. The film tells the dramatic story of the famous composer's fall from Court favour and his quarrel with the foolish, foppish Frederick, Prince of Wales ("Poor Fred"); and his tremendous come-back as the result of his magnificent oratorio, "The Messiah," produced in Dublin in 1742.

Handel realises that he has embarked on a great undertaking in "The Messiah."

Bathing beauties competed for the title of "Miss Ireland, 1942" at Pickie Pool, Bangor. The eventual winner is fourth from the right.

The MAYORESS OF BANGOR *presented the cup to* MISS PEGGY WHITTEL, *who won the title of "Miss Ireland."*

"MISS IRELAND, 1942" *passing the judges door and*

"MISS IRELAND, 1942"—CHOSEN BY AMERICAN NAVAL AND MILITARY "JUDGES."

OFFICERS of the United States Army and Navy selected "Miss Ireland, 1942" from seventy colleens at a bathing-beauty competition held at Pickie Pool, Bangor, County Down, Northern Ireland. Most of the seventy competitors and the members of the audience were war workers enjoying a little well-earned rest from factory or farm, parade ground or flying-field. The "judges" had had actual experience of the famous beauty competitions

The parade of competitors for the title of " Miss Ireland." American naval and military officers acted as judges.

Competitors came through a shamrock-leaf-shaped down steps.

The winner and runners-up. PEGGY WHITTEL *(right),* KATHLEEN BAILEY *(centre) and* JUNE COCHRANE *(left).*

and parades at Los Angeles and other U.S.A. cities, and gave their awards after careful consideration. MISS PEGGY WHITTEL, nineteen-year-old shop assistant from the handkerchief department of a Belfast store, was the winner of the title of "Miss Ireland, 1942." She has dark hair and green eyes, and is 5 ft. 2 ins. in height. She was presented with a silver cup, and the next five girls received money prizes. Miss Kathleen Bailey and Miss June Cochrane, the runners-up, are, respectively, a bookkeeper, and a vocalist and dancer. The competition was filmed for the American and British news-reels by Jack Barnett, an American official camera-man with the U.S. Forces in Northern Ireland. Shots from the pictures are being sent to New York for consideration by studio executives, with a view to picking future starlets from the competitors.

Captain Kinross (NOEL COWARD) and his officers keep ceaseless watch on the bridge of the destroyer H.M.S. "Torrin."

LIFE-STORY OF A SHIP—NOEL COWARD'S "IN WHICH WE SERVE."

"IN WHICH WE SERVE," the Noel Coward Two Cities film of the Royal Navy, will be shown simultaneously at the Gaumont, Haymarket, and the Marble Arch Pavilion, from Sunday, Sept. 27. The gala 6.30 performance at the Gaumont is in aid of the Royal Naval Benevolent Trust. [Continued below.

News—good or bad? Mrs. Kinross (CELIA JOHNSON) *nerves herself to open the telegram, while her children, Lavinia* (ANN STEPHENS) *and Bobby* (DANIEL MASSEY), *watch tensely.*

Romantic meeting in a railway-train compartment. Seaman Shorty Blake (JOHN MILLS) *falls in love with Freda Lewis* (KAY WELSH).

Badly mauled, but still afloat: the crew of H.M.S. "Torrin" bring her safely back to port in spite of damage.

The captain and his officers on the bridge of H.M.S. "Torrin," which is listing dangerously after an engagement.

Continued.]
The picture, which is the story of a destroyer, and the men who sail her, was made at Denham, produced by the author, Noel Coward (who plays the leading rôle), and co-directed by him and David Lean, of "49th Parallel" fame. Noel Coward has composed the special music. H.M.S. "Torrin" is launched in 1938, and is lost off Crete in 1941, after a life of magnificent service. Five officers and ninety men only survive. So ends the story of H.M.S. "Torrin," but there are other ships . . . and there will always be.

Machine-gunned while clinging to a Carley float in the sea: survivors from the torpedoed destroyer.

CARLA LEHMANN'S LATEST: TWO FILM STILLS OF A STAR.

CARLA LEHMANN, young blonde screen-star, has just been seen in a couple of pictures, "SECRET MISSION," an exciting drama about British agents in Occupied France; and "TALK ABOUT JACQUELINE," a domestic drama concerned with a girl who got married and didn't tell. In the former she played with Hugh Williams, James Mason and Roland Culver.

CARLA LEHMANN *plays a French girl, Michele de Carnot, in* "SECRET MISSION," *recently presented at the Leicester Square Theatre.*

A still of CARLA LEHMANN *in* "TALK ABOUT JACQUELINE," *a new picture which has just been seen at the Empire, Leicester Square.*

Carla Lehmann's speckled pyjamas are becoming. She wore them in a sequence of "Talk About Jacqueline."

THE LITERARY LOUNGER.

By L. P. HARTLEY.

THE translator—one might say the reincarnator—of "Chinese Poems" and "The Tale of Genji" has now put his incomparable gift to a task which may not have been quite so congenial as either of those. "Monkey" is an immensely long Chinese fairy-story, "A 'Pilgrim's Progress' that is religious without being pietistic," written by an author who flourished between 1505 and 1580. Founded on the adventures of a real person, it has always been a best-seller in China, but even Orientals, with their more flexible time-sense, found it long, and Mr. Waley has only followed their example in abridging it. The version he gives us, though longer than the ordinary novel, is only a fraction of the original. But, unless one has an inordinate appetite for the marvellous, the first part, which is an account of the pranks by which Monkey disturbed the bureaucratic calm of Heaven, drags a little in places. "With his sharp little teeth and grinning mouth, his fiery steely eyes, his flat head and hairy cheeks, for all the world like a veritable thunder-demon," Monkey makes a curious hero of romance. The Chinese, it seems, are more attracted than repelled by the grotesque—at any rate, the grotesque in human form. They are exceedingly susceptible to beauty in landscape, in art, and in the moral sphere, but in all the hundreds of figures, mortal, immortal, and semi-mortal, who crowd the pages of "Monkey," I do not remember that one is praised or mentioned for beauty of appearance, whereas monsters are described in the most loving detail—feature by hideous feature.

The Allegory. But Monkey is only the hero of the first part. Heaven having failed to subdue him, or to placate him with the handsome title of "Great Sage, Equal of Heaven," he is handed over to Buddha, who imprisons him under a mountain for five hundred years. The reader breathes a sigh of relief, as Heaven did, to think that this Jack-in-the-box, whose vitality and mobility are surely the greatest recorded in literature, has been safely battened down. Delivered at length through the kind offices of the Goddess of Mercy, he joins the pious Tripitaka on his journey to India to fetch "the scriptures"—the written repository of the Buddhist faith. Physically still a bounder, with the same power of vertical ascent into the empyrean, in temperament he is considerably subdued; his concern is no longer for personal aggrandisement, but for the welfare of Tripitaka. On his way, this holy man collects two other disciples, hardly less grotesque, Pigsy and Sandy.

"As regards the allegory," writes Mr. Waley, in a preface which, brief as it is, seems to make further comment on the book superfluous, "it is clear that Tripitaka stands for the ordinary man, blundering anxiously through the difficulties of life, while Monkey stands for the restless instability of genius. Pigsy, again, obviously symbolises the physical appetites, brute strength, and a kind of cumbrous patience. Sandy is more mysterious. . . ."

Sandy, however, has but a small rôle in the tale of calamities that befell the travelling companions during their fourteen years' journey to India. Eighty calamities there were, all (we may presume) involving extreme danger to life and limb; but eighty-one was a mystic number, and Heaven decreed that the return journey, which, divinely organised, only took eight days, should be interrupted by a nasty fall into a river.

Matter and Spirit. The transmigration of souls was a commonplace of Chinese thought, so that for them there is nothing incongruous in an animal talking. They draw no hard-and-fast line, as most Europeans do, between matter and spirit, since to them matter is only an aspect of spirit, and can change its form if the right kind of magic is brought to bear. To them, Monkey's adventures outside Time and Space would seem miraculous, but hardly more surprising than do the similar experiences we have in dreams. The matter-of-fact way in which they respond to the marvellous is an unfailing delight to a European reader. Over and over again "Monkey" reminds us of "Alice in Wonderland," the same common sense is applied to fantastic happenings, in conversations the characters are equally practical and outspoken. Indeed, "Monkey" owes a great deal of its entertainment value to the dialogue. Testifying as the book does to the dignity and endurance of the human spirit under unparalleled misfortunes, it could not have been published at a more opportune moment; and Mr. Waley, whose translation fully maintains his standard—the highest there is—has put us more than ever in his debt.

Quite involuntarily, GENERAL SIKORSKI, *Polish Commander-in-Chief, was "air-borne" when he visited a famous Polish squadron of the R.A.F. to celebrate its birthday. After an investiture, and a march-past, he dined with the officers, N.C.O.s and men. Later he made a speech, was chaired by squadron members and was gaily hurled into the air three times. The same Polish compliment was paid to Mr. Hugh Dalton, who accompanied the General.*

Two Points of View. Mr. James Branch Cabell is another purveyor of the marvellous, and "The First American Gentleman" is also an allegory, but an allegory treated with the self-conscious sophistication for which this author is well known. He takes us back to the country of Ajacan (now called Virginia) in the time of the Conquistadors. Quetzal, its ruler, reputed to be the son of the White Cloud Serpent, takes his claims to divinity less seriously than do his subjects: what he does take seriously is their welfare, and this, he believes, can best be promoted by an attitude to life the opposite of that held by the Spanish conquerors. In the names of religion and patriotism they were killing and torturing the inhabitants of the New World: therefore patriotism must be abolished, and religion too.

But his son, a demi-god, fraternised with the Spaniards, made friends with their leader, Don Pedro Menéndez, visited Mexico and Spain, and went so far as to adopt a Spanish name—Don Luis de Velasco. While separated from his shrewish wife, he indulged in gallantries which Mr. Cabell describes with a nice eye for the nuances of impropriety. But in time he tires of love-making, remembers his duty to his people and returns to Ajacan to face the inevitable breach with his friend Don Pedro. The scene between them, with the poisoned cup, is very well done, and his interview with the starving Jesuits, to whom he first denied, and then unexpectedly permitted, the right of martyrdom, must have given Mr. Cabell a great deal of pleasure to write. Eventually Don Luis led his people away into the interior, to be out of reach of the Eastern aggressors, and their homicidal idealisms. He seems to have been the first Isolationist, as well as the First American Gentleman. One may or may not enjoy the way Mr. Cabell writes, but there is no doubt that he is an artist.

Seventy Years Young. We must congratulate Mr. Stephen Leacock on reaching three-score years and ten, and judging from the gusto with which he writes in "My Remarkable Uncle, and Other Sketches," no one would suspect it. He can see the humour of growing old, and has preserved the humour of his youth as well. He still gives us those headlong cataracts of words, swelling with pretentiousness until they topple over into absurdity—"New shingled bungalows with loggias and pergolas, overgrown with wistaria and perugia," for example. He makes solemn or uproarious fun of fishermen, gentlemen, old school days, Christmas shopping; he essays with considerable success a short story in which the middle-aged professor, smitten with love for his beautiful pupil, took leave of her with the words: "We shall resume our discussions on Monday," because, "being a professor, he knew no other form of farewell." But the age he has arrived at, as well as the age he lives in, has left its mark. In the course of some observations on humour, more serious in tone than most of the sketches in the book, he denies that humour can be, in the most literal sense of the term, a "saving grace." Humorous speeches, uttered on a death-bed, are not really funny: they simply betoken courage. "When tragedy steps in, humour moves out. It is too soft a plant . . . for such a soil. Humour springs best from happiness. . . . A jail is no place for it. It belongs either with happiness, or with the remembrance of bygone happiness, or with the long retrospect into a past so far away that the pain is out of it. Battles long ago are different." He does not, therefore, approve of war jokes. "We must keep our sense of humour till after the war."

An interesting theory; but it would be denied by all who find humour in Swift's remark: "Last week I saw a woman flayed, and you have no idea how it altered her appearance for the worse."

A Difficult Investigation. "When Last I Died" owes its merit more to the manner of the telling than to the story itself, though Miss Gladys Mitchell never allows the interest of the plot to flag. Mrs. Bradley, the detective, sets herself a formidable task: to discover the author of a murder six years old. So cold a scent might be expected to yield a difficult run. But the redoubtable detective is in good form, capable of holding the frailest clue, of noticing the most minute discrepancy. As may be imagined, there is a wealth of these in stories six years old; and though some of the witnesses are blessed with encyclopædic memories, others are as vague as most people would be about events long past. The difficulties of the investigation are increased by the presence of

Poltergeist and fetch and fay
And leprechaun and brownie

—and Mrs. Bradley sometimes has to fall back on the omniscience permitted to her profession.

BOOKS REVIEWED.

Monkey. By Wu Ch'êng-ên. Translated from the Chinese by Arthur Waley. *(George Allen and Unwin; 12s. 6d.)*

The First American Gentleman. By Branch Cabell. *(The Bodley Head; 7s. 6d.)*

My Remarkable Uncle, and Other Sketches. By Stephen Leacock. *(The Bodley Head; 7s. 6d.)*

When Last I Died. By Gladys Mitchell. *(Michael Joseph; 8s.)*

BETTE DAVIS AS THE GIRL WHO COULD GET ANYTHING SHE WANTED.

Roy (OLIVIA DE HAVILLAND) *hears that her husband, Peter* (DENNIS MORGAN), *has fallen in love with her sister, Stanley.*

Stanley Timberlake (BETTE DAVIS), *who boasts that she can get anything she wants, sets her cap at her brother-in-law, Peter.*

Sister accuses sister: Roy tells the officials that she believes Stanley to be lying about the car accident.

Craig Fleming (GEORGE BRENT), *with Stanley and the unhappy coloured boy Perry Clay* (ERNEST ANDERSON), *who has been jailed for her crime.*

Stanley confesses to Craig. Lavinia (BILLIE BURKE), *Asa* (FRANK CRAVEN), *and Roy listen.*

"IN THIS OUR LIFE," new Warner Brothers picture due at the Warner Theatre, Leicester Square, on September 18, is a kind of cautionary tale, with Bette Davis giving a superb performance as the selfish girl who could get anything she wanted, and did not hesitate to take it. She grabs her sister's husband, and when she has driven him to suicide, comes home and creates more havoc. She is involved in a car crash, and lets a coloured boy go to jail in her place, but her sister, Roy, now her implacable enemy, sees that justice is done.

The sordid end of a selfish but fascinating woman: BETTE DAVIS *as Stanley driving to her death.*

REALISM.*

By HERBERT BRERETON.

PENERBY was a good batman, and being a good batman he produced from one of those mysterious sources known only to good batmen a cup of tea, which he held in one hand while with the other he gently shook his officer into a reluctant consciousness.

"Penerby?"

"Sir?"

"What time is it?"

"Ten minutes to five, Sir."

"Good. I went round the Posts at half-past three, and Sergeant Summers has been round since then, so everything's all—all . . ." The voice faded and the eyes closed.

"Sir."

"Oh, good morning, Penerby."

"Good morning, Sir. Your tea." Penerby thrust the cup forward. The youngish man who had once been a member of a firm of accountants, but was now the commander-in-chief of Number Twelve platoon, sat up. He was fully dressed, including boots, respirator and equipment. His rolled gas-cape had served as a pillow, his great-coat as a blanket while he had slept for an unpleasantly small portion of the night on the bleak hillside.

"We must be on our toes to-day, Penerby," he said as he drank the tea.

"Yes, Sir." Penerby said soothingly.

"As we've been in reserve since the beginning of the exercise, we shall probably be called upon to move up and put in the attack to-day."

"I suppose we shall, Sir," Penerby said, with some lack of enthusiasm, for his feet were very sore.

"Have you got blisters, Penerby?"

"Oh, no, Sir. Well—er—I have got just one small one."

"Where?"

"My heel, Sir."

"The same with me. Great big blighters."

"So are mine, Sir; both heels. We'll manage all right, Sir."

"Good Lord, yes! Of course, you won't breathe a——"

"Certainly not, Sir."

"The C.O. was saying yesterday that there's still not enough realism in these exercises. We must behave as if the Boche were actually here. Realism, that's what's wanted, realism, Penerby."

"Yes, Sir. I can get some hot water if you want to shave now."

Two hours later the company went into battle. Penerby usually enjoyed doing battle; it had all the excitement of a good Soccer match with a stronger element of the unexpected. The umpires were often entertaining, too, especially when they were field officers with a flair for amateur acting. This time it was not so good. His heels were very painful and they were advancing under a smoke-screen through a swamp in which were clumps of alders.

Umpires standing on small patches of dry ground threw thunder-flashes and declared that they could hear bullets flying past. Every now and then they told some man that he was dead and would have to go back.

Penerby could only dimly see the men deployed on either side of him. He peered forward through the smoke for his officer, but a twisted root, rearing itself out of the earth, caught his foot and he fell heavily. For a few seconds he lay half-stunned. Then he climbed uncertainly to his feet. Already he was considerably behind the rest of the platoon. He started forward.

The alders became thicker. Ahead of him Penerby could hear the sound of undergrowth being beaten down by heavy feet, and beyond that the peevish snap of blank ammunition. Nevertheless, he seemed to be losing ground, and when he saw a narrow track which apparently led in the direction he wanted to take, he followed it.

The ground became drier and the alders gave place to larger and denser trees. Suddenly Penerby stopped. In the shadow of a thick bush was a darker shadow. . . . He levelled his rifle. "Come on out; you're a prisoner."

Spies and fifth columnists, and men who infiltrated behind one's lines, were common enough on schemes. They gave additional realism. The man crawled out. He had a four-days' growth of beard on his face and innumerable cuts and scratches. He was wearing the uniform of a Nazi airman.

"You're—you're a GERMAN?" Penerby demanded incredulously, but keeping the man covered with his unloaded rifle.

"Yes, I am," his prisoner replied, in slow, careful English.

Penerby's heart gave a great bound. This good fortune was almost unbelievable. He took the man's revolver, which was loaded, and also a long, sharp knife. His prisoner seemed too exhausted to care what happened.

"Walk in front of me," Penerby ordered, and started to march the man along the path. He fixed his bayonet, and then slung his rifle over his shoulder, for he had decided that the revolver was the best weapon with which to keep his prisoner covered.

The Nazi walked forward at a slow pace. He was nearing the final stages of exhaustion, and his uniform was so thickly encrusted with mud that he might well have been in khaki.

There was the sharp crackle of breaking twigs, and an umpire, a rather unhappy-looking major, appeared on the path.

This was Penerby's great moment. "Sir, I've caught a German airman," he said, his voice shrill with excitement.

"Only one? Well, take him back to B.H.Q."

"But, Sir, this——"

"Don't stop me now, and, by the way, shells are falling all over the place. Just use a little imagination, man." He rushed on.

"Go on," Penerby said, in a strained voice. His prisoner obeyed. There was the crunch of bicycle tyres on the path. "Look out!"

"Here, stop!" Penerby shouted as the orderly went by.

"Can't; urgent message."

"But this is important. I've caught a German. . . ."

"We've captured a whole company of them higher up. One's no good." The bicycle disappeared round a corner.

"Go on," Penerby said again. If his prisoner had any interest in the proceedings, he did not show it. They plodded onwards. A lance-corporal came running towards them.

"Corporal, come here, I've caught a German; a real——"

"All prisoners are to take their tin hats off and report . . ."

Penerby never heard the rest of the reply, for the N.C.O. was in a hurry. They went forward once again. "What's your name?" demanded Penerby. "Jurgen Klein."

"What happened to your 'plane?"

A sullen look came over the Nazi's face. "I don't understand."

"All right, all right. But do just what you're told, see?"

They moved forward, and then, to his great relief, Penerby saw his own officer lying on his stomach behind a bank, over which he was peering. Penerby started forward, touching his prisoner with the revolver to hurry him. From out of the bushes a hand descended on Penerby's shoulder. "Give me that rifle."

"But, Sir, I've got a——"

"Give me that rifle."

Penerby obeyed. The Nazi, who appeared to be stupefied by exhaustion, stood motionless, realising that Penerby had stopped. The umpire removed the bayonet from Penerby's rifle.

"Sir," Penerby said desperately, "I've got a prisoner, and——"

"All the more reason for you not to have your bayonet fixed; you must know perfectly well that it's against orders. What you're doing with a revolver I don't know, and you will not, at this stage of a scheme, carry your rifle slung. You must be alert and ready for anything. What's your name?"

Before Penerby could reply, somebody called the umpire away.

"Stand just where you are," Penerby ordered his prisoner. "I'm going to keep you covered, see?" The man nodded. His face, with its covering of bristle and mud, was brutish but not cunning. He was a bovine type, and showed no sign of guile. Nevertheless, Penerby walked backwards, with the Nazi's revolver in his right hand.

"Penerby, you fool, get down!"

Penerby obeyed, but kept his eyes on his prisoner.

"What the devil do you think you're doing wandering about like this? You've about as much idea of realism in a scheme as——"

"But I've got a prisoner, a German prisoner, Sir."

"We're not fighting the Germans to-day, we're fighting the Japs. You ought to know that. And now it's zero hour for our attack on the machine-gun nest."

"But my prisoner, Sir, he's——"

"Follow behind," ordered Penerby's officer, as he scrambled up. "Come on, you chaps, the smoke's going down."

From behind banks and inside ditches men appeared. They lumbered past Penerby as they went into the attack. None of them glanced at the muddy, unrecognisable figure of the Nazi. Penerby went over to him. "Come on," he said.

"I go no further."

"You can stay here if you want to, but it will be as a dead man, see?"

"You mean?" The German glanced at the revolver.

"I sure do," returned Penerby, who liked American films.

The advance was rapid and successful, and Penerby found that, with his awkward, stumbling prisoner, it was impossible to keep up. In a few minutes they were alone again.

They came to a hedge. Behind it was a road. A Bren-gun carrier rattled past. Then Penerby saw a blue-helmeted figure cycling leisurely along. "Hi!" he shouted.

"Good day to you," the constable replied.

"I've got a German prisoner here. . . ."

"Aye, there's a few hundred of them about these parts to-day. A right good battle they're having up on Brooke's Hill." The man rode on.

A little further up the road was a farm. Penerby led the way through the hedge, and motioned his prisoner towards the farm. A woman was feeding the hens in the yard.

"Hi, Mum, I've got a German prisoner here."

The woman looked at Penerby and the Nazi through gold-rimmed spectacles. "Make him go in that outhouse; we can lock the door. Then I'll telephone for the police," she said, in a thin, precise voice.

Penerby obeyed.

"H'm," said the woman, "I've never seen a German before. He don't look up to much, does he?"

"No." Penerby eyed the thick brick walls and the stout oak door of the outhouse in which his prisoner was safely lodged. "I suppose, Mum, you don't happen to have a drop of tea. . . ."

"Come inside," said the woman. [THE END.

**All the characters and incidents in this story are imaginary.*

Until then . . . The time will come when, like the Phœnix, China's emblem of peace, that country will arise from the fire of war, a nation whose spirit is unconquerable. October 10th is the Birthday of the Chinese Republic. On that day Britain's Birthday Gift will be presented to Madame Chiang Kai-shek for the people of China. Make this gift worthy of one great people to another.

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WOMEN IN WARTIME

HARD-WEARING FURS

CASHMERE CARDIGANS AND PULLOVERS

THERE is no doubt that nowadays more than ever quality pays, as coupons have to be carefully counted. Harvey Nichols, Knightsbridge, are making a feature of dresses that may be worn for informal functions throughout the year. Illustrated above is a one-piece dress, the black skirt and blouse-jacket being cleverly united. The latter is in gay colours, and is endowed with a glorious sheen. Again, there are little black dresses reinforced with gay handkerchief draperies over the shoulders. Here are likewise to be seen a variety of Travella coats in bold check designs, which are beautifully light in weight and warm.

IT is safe to predict that the majority of coupons will be spent on warmth-giving garments during the ensuing months, as fuel economy will have to be practised. The cardigan, or house-coat, pictured above comes from Fortnum and Mason's, Piccadilly, and is made of pure cashmere, which is very light and warm. Some of the models are accompanied by pullovers of the same material in extremely cheerful colour schemes. For the winter, this firm is making Fortknees—knitted woollen accessories. They are innocent of feet, they fit the leg snugly, and pass over the knees; they are finished with a special device for protecting the muscles.

IT is indeed splendid news that the City Fur Store has returned to London and taken new salons at 110, New Bond Street, which are delightfully light and airy. It will be recalled that their former London premises were in the City. They are showing fur coats and wraps for the younger women and have likewise studied the needs of the older women. Furthermore, they are making a feature of hard-wearing furs, including civet cat, ponyskin, Greenland seal and Indian lamb. Pictured on this page is a cape of shaded Arctic fox, which is particularly decorative and will give a new lease of life to a dress that has already done yeoman service. A few words must be said about the blended musquash coats, the skins of which are so beautifully worked that it is difficult to believe that they are not of mink.

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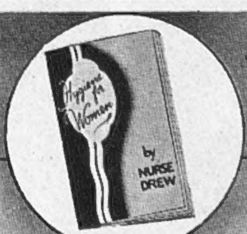

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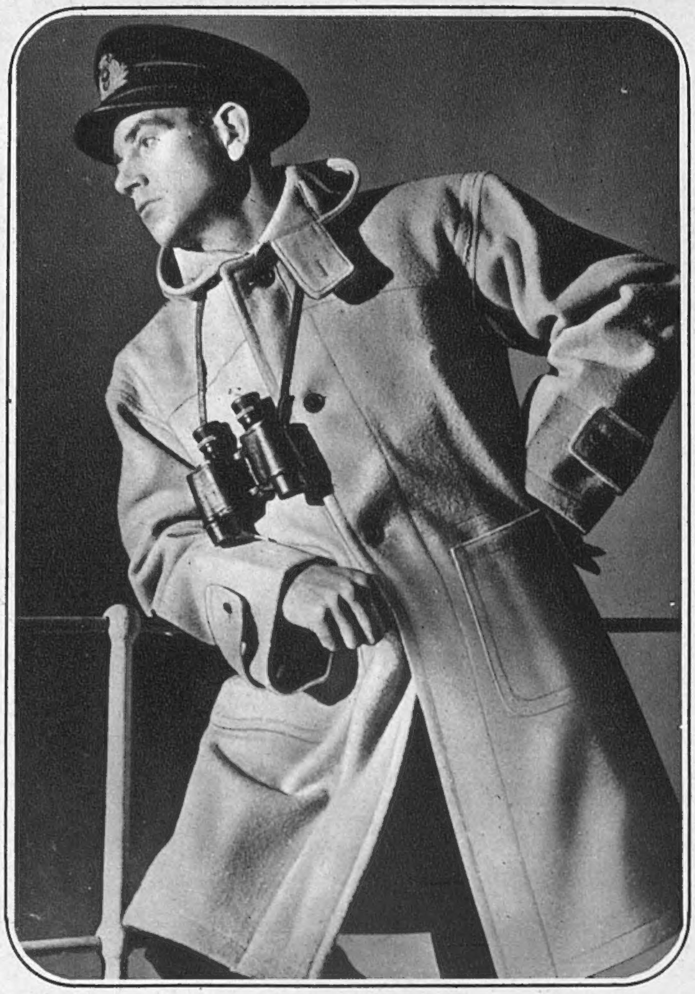

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